

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NEA-10 EUR-12 PM-05 DODE-00 ACDA-12
CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-02 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-02
/077 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:GWSMOTT:SM X20849

APPROVED BY AF/E:RPOST

-----043451 030640Z /23

P 030223Z DEC 77

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI

UNCLAS STATE 288743

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: DJ, KE, OCLR

SUBJECT:MIDEASTFOR TURNOVER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1. FOLLOWING PRESS RELEASE ISSUED LONDON DECEMBER 2:

QUOTE THE ROUTINE RELIEF OF SHIPS DEPLOYED TO THE U.S. NAVY'S MIDDLE EAST FORCE (MIDEASTFOR) WAS COMPLETED THIS WEEK AT AQABA, JORDAN. THE DESTROYER USS DAVIS (DD-937) AND THE GUIDED MISSILE FRIGATE USS FURER (FFG-6) HAVE REPLACED THE GUIDED MISSILE DESTROYER USS SELLERS (DDG-11) AND THE FRIGATE USS BOWEN (FF-1097) AS UNITS OF THE MIDEASTFOR. BOWEN AND SELLERS HAVE TRANSITED THE SUEZ CANAL AND ARE ENROUTE THEIR HOMEPORT OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, WHERE THEY ARE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

DAVIS AND FURER HAVE DEPARTED AQABA ENROUTE ROUTINE OPERATIONS IN THE RED SEA, PERSIAN GULF AND WEST INDIAN OCEAN AREAS. A FUEL STOP ON DECEMBER 5 AT DJIBOUTI, REPUBLIC OF UNCLASSIFIED

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DJIBOUTI, IS PLANNED, FOLLOWED BY A HOLIDAY PORT VISIT AT MOMBASA, KENYA.

THE MIDDLE EAST FORCE IS COMMANDED BY RADM SAMUEL PACKER, US NAVY. HIS THREE SHIPS INCLUDE THE COMMAND SHIP LASALLE

(AGF-3) AND TWO DEPLOYED SURFACE WARSHIPS THAT ROTATE

ABOUT EVERY FOUR MONTHS. THE MIDDLE EAST FORCE WAS ESTABLISHED IN JANUARY 1949. ITS MISSION IS TO REPRESENT U.S. NATIONAL INTERESTS AND TO MAINTAIN U.S. PRESENCE IN THE PERSIAN GULF, RED SEA AND WESTERN INDIAN OCEAN AREAS, AND TO PROMOTE GOOD WILL, UNDERSTANDING AND MUTUAL RESPECT THROUGH PORT VISITS TO THE NUMEROUS COUNTRIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND EASTERN AFRICA. END QUOTE

2. EMBASSIES DJIBOUTI AND NAIROBI SHOULD INFORM HOST GOVERNMENTS THAT IN CONJUNCTION WITH ANNOUNCEMENT OF RELIEF OF SHIPS OF MIDDLE EAST FORCE, SHIP VISITS TO PORTS OF HOST GOVERNMENTS WERE ALSO MENTIONED. EMBASSIES SHOULD SUGGEST THEREFORE THAT HOST GOVERNMENTS MIGHT WISH TO AUTHORIZE PASSING OF SAME INFORMATION TO LOCAL PRESS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Dec-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE288743
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: GWSMOTT:SM X20849
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770448-1061
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771296/aaaaddsw.tel
Line Count: 77
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 58f9430c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 370161
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MIDEASTFOR TURNOVER PUBLIC AFFAIRS
TAGS: OCLR, DJ, KE
To: NAIROBI DJIBOUTI
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/58f9430c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009